

YOUTHFUL MODES

Frocks for the Debutante and School Girl.

SIMPLER EFFECTS SOUGHT

Correct Ideas in Girls' Dress Gaining Steadily.

American Mothers Using Better Taste in Gowning Their Daughters—Importance of the Hang of the Skirt and the Corset Question—Attractive Costumes for Southern Trips or Spring Wear—Pretty Party Frocks—Belong and Longer Coats—The New Thin Dress Goods.

There's a popular impression to the effect that, so far as clothes are concerned, the day of the ingenu is past in this country of ours. One hears on every hand lamentation concerning the extravagance and pretentiousness of the frocks of the schoolgirl and the debutante.

There's no denying that there is a certain amount of cause for the criticism. In many American families money is more plentiful than taste, and even where an old-fashioned mother does hold to earlier tenets of girlish simplicity in dress the



spoiled and assertive daughter often follows her own bent regardless of maternal protest.

Possibly in no other place is this tendency more in evidence than in the New York boarding school. There one finds girls from wealthy families in all parts of the country, and the outfit of clothing brought to school by many of the pupils are wonderful and fearful.

School circulars warn parents that only simple clothing will be needed, but the warning is ignored, probably because the young person is allowed to follow out her own wishes in regard to the outfit, and not infrequently in the more independent and exclusive schools a principal is obliged to assert her authority and good taste and forbid the wearing of glaringly inappropriate costumes, jewels, etc. All of which is evidence to strengthen a plea for greater appropriateness and good taste in the costume of our older schoolgirls and debutantes. Luckily the reform is not universally necessary.

There are innumerable mothers with



good sense and good taste, and the correct ideas concerning youthful dress are gaining steadily. The young girl's party frock to-day may possibly be more costly than it would have been ten years ago, but the expense is likely to be in distinctness of material and work rather than in showiness.

To a certain extent the clothes of girls in their late teens are modeled upon the modes adopted by older women. The velvet mania of the winter has, for instance, found its place in girlish frocks, but with a difference. Youthful street and visiting frocks of velvet are to be seen wherever smart young folk congregate, but the home frocks and evening frocks of velvet, the gorgeous trimmings, the rich broadsides and the heavy silks are rather reserved for the older women, and many of the prevailing modes are by no means youthful.

The fitted draped bodice, with its sharp point and defined bust, is not so satisfactory for the girlish figure as the blouse, and though even for the girl's frock the blouse line is raised and the blouse fulness modified the effect is achieved in the best models by using a girle rather than a fitted bodice, and the extreme point is not attempted.

A well known English authority on dress, speaking of the young American girl's clothes recently, admitted that a majority of girls here were rather over-dressed, but added truthfully that even the too elaborately dressed American girl looks better than the simply clad English maiden.

"The hang of the skirts and the corseting are largely responsible for the difference," said the critic. "American mothers will spend more upon their young daughters' petticoats and corsets than our English mothers will, and the result is that their daughters have a certain grace and chic, while our young girls are prone to angles and awkwardness."

There was truth in the verdict, and even American mothers would do well to pay more attention to the corseting of their young girls. If one has prejudices against the corset and forbids it altogether, well and good. We take off our hat to the strong minded advocate of hygienic clothing. But if corsets are worn, let them be corsets correctly fitted and suitable for the youthful wear.

Exaggerated lines of any kind in a corset are always nonsensical, but it must be confessed they are sometimes modish for

maturity. For the young girl, for the girl in her teens, they are not only absurd from artistic and hygienic viewpoints, but they are incorrect from a modish viewpoint.

An extreme dip to the waist line, a contracted waist and exaggerated bust curve or extreme straight front are out of place in the girlish corset. The material of the corset should be very soft and the boning not very stiff, the waist should have ample room, the waist line follow its natural bent, the hips be slender instead of accentuated.

Many fashionable girls wear the soft satin ribbon girdles and find them all that is necessary, but there is a great difference even in the shaping of these girdles and it is necessary that one should be carefully fitted. While a corset may be necessary to the smooth fitting waist curves, the upper body should have free muscular play and will be the more graceful for this freedom.

Good petticoats, too, are essential to the success of the girl's frock. If a frock clears the ground it demands even more support and from frock than the long skirted costume, and plenty of silk ruffles are necessary to make the young girl's skirt stand out in chic fashion instead of clinging limply round her ankles. The top of the skirt may be of jersey, mohair or other service-

able material, but it should be well fitted and silk ruffles are preferable to any others save, of course, in the lingerie petticoat.

Given a correct corset and a correct petticoat, it should be an easy matter to make a girl in her teens look smartly attired.

We have chosen our sketches for to-day from models intended for the girl of 17 or 18, rather than for her younger sister, and some of these models are not so simple in fact as in appearance, but no one of them is unsuitable for the debutante, and they will all be found practicable for Southern wear during the next two months and for spring and summer wear in this climate.

The thin stuffs, organza, mousselines, chiffons, gauzes, nets, batistes, laces, etc., are always youthful in suggestion, though older women claim an interest in them,

with white ground is at its best over a tint, but the tint must be very carefully selected in relation to the floral design and in a majority of cases coloring and line of the design show to best advantage over a white lining. The mistake of using under a transparent flowered white ground material a silk in the color of the flowers is a common and usually a disastrous one.

The flowered gauze evening frock of the large cut is effective, yet very simple of construction. Even the lace skirt flounces may be replaced by flounces of the mousseline if a very inexpensive frock is required, but the lace is more attractive.

The floral design is of tiny pink roses and forget-me-nots and a narrow velvet ribbon in forget-me-not blue heads the flounces in festoon and bow knot design. Similar velvet ribbon is on each side of the bouillonné that borders the V shaped décolletage and the interlacing and knots of ribbon on the front of the bodice is an attractive detail.

Velvet, silk and satin ribbons laid on

the shoulder ribbon upon the last model mentioned, is repeated in one form or another upon many of the evening frocks for youthful wearers, and makes possible a graceful low line for the bodice or other décolletage trimming, without exposing more of the neck and shoulders than is correct for a young girl. The semi-décolletage is no always becoming, is in fact seldom becoming, but a low cut corsage giving the broad shoulder lines but filled in with a bouillonné of chiffon bordering the round décolletage.

The genuine Louis or Directoire coat is considered too old for a girl under 18, and, as a matter of fact, demands a well developed and mature figure, but the idea of the silk coat worn with skirt of mousseline, chiffon, etc., is carried out in a jaunty bolero of silk worn over a sheer blouse and skirt for house and dinner wear; and occasionally one does see a short full basque little coat of silk even upon the young girl, though in this case the coat is usually modified by the addition of a girle or a

few patterns of this sort are coming over, and we may see more later.

The printed dainties should be taken into consideration this season by girls who are already thinking of summer frocks, and whose seamstress comes early. Dainties are always crisp, fresh, serviceable, the most desirable of the thinner cottons for morning and unpretentious wear in summer, but never before have the printed dainties been so alluring, and without other trimmings than collar and cuffs of embroidery or lace, these materials would make delightful frocks for hot mornings.

The street frocks for spring and summer will be of tulle, serge, tweed, mohair or light weight cloth and the models of the winter bid fair to be closely followed, although, as usual in hot weather, the percentage of boleros will doubtless increase. The bolero is distinctly the youthful coat, and though basque coats, long fitted coats and sack coats have their vogue, the average girl up to 18 looks better in some form of bolero than in any other coat.

Variety depends upon the trimming de-

tailed trimming upon the very fine tiny garlands embroidered in straying fashion wherever the maker considers they will do most good.

An embroidered turnover collar of the lawn and a soft scarf at the throat, a girle to match the scarf—and there you have the most exquisite of summer morning frocks. But it is an expensive luxury here where hand embroidery is so extravagantly dear, and the girl who can do her own embroidery must needs get to work now if she wants the frock for summer.

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are constant favorites for the young girl's evening frock and, on the whole, are perhaps the most satisfactory combination of dainty shewiness and wearing qualities; but here again a chiffon interlining is desirable, and fine lace and hand work are lavished upon many of the net gowns that look delectably simple.

A charming idea, originally developed in a French model, but copied many times, by at least one New York dressmaker, concerned the trimming of a frock of point d'esprit in the very soft quality. The frock was made over the palest pink silk and chiffon of the same faint shade, and the trimmings of skirt and bodice, aside from net flounces and frills, consisted of soft scarf of the net drawn through little applied wreaths of tiny pink roses and foliage. This trimming scheme works out well in any soft, sheer stuff.

The linings of white transparent or semi-transparent materials with some delicate tint gives good results if very cleverly done, but the all white frock is safer proposition, and transparent white gauze shimmering tinted silk without the interposed softening of chiffon is seldom successful.

Another point requiring care is the lining of the flowered sheer stuff. Sometimes a flowered gauze or other similar material

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for the young girl. Plain soft finished tulle, too, in delicate tints and lace trimmed may be made essentially youthful, and the tulle and checked surahs and soft tulle tulle are suitable for the girl's shirt waist frock. Little checks in light blue and white, rose and white, chambray and white, are to be found not only in silk, but also in silk velvets, very sheer wool velvets and even in cotton damasks, and they make up charmingly for the girl in her